

monitoring activity of the I/O device;

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detecting the I/O device being inactive for a predetermined period of time; and

the virtual device driver placing the I/O device in a reduced power consumption state in response to the I/O device being detected as inactive.

30. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising the step of initializing, at boot-up time, a plurality of data structures associated with the virtual device driver.

31. The method defined in claim 29 wherein the step of monitoring comprises the virtual device driver monitoring activity of the I/O device at the occurrence of a system timer interrupt.

32. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising the step of varying the predetermined period of time.

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33. The method defined in claim 32 wherein the predetermined period of time is varied based on desired power savings.

34. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising the step of the virtual device driver adjusting an events timer according to activity of the device.

35. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising the steps of:

a configuration manager notifying the virtual device driver of system resources being remapped; and
the virtual device driver examining its data structures to adapt itself to the remapped system resources.

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